

There was no dainty lunch on the table when she ran into the house at noon. Mother was quietly sewing, seeming not the least bit disturbed because there was nothing prepared.

"Aren't we going to have any lunch?" the hungry little girl asked in surprise.

"You will find something in the pantry," said mother, without looking up from her work. "It was just too much bother to put it on the table."

Helen went slowly off to the pantry, thinking how strange it was for mother to talk that way. Her bread and butter, banana and cookies did not taste nearly as good as if they had been placed on the table and mother had been sitting across from her.

"Will you please tie my ribbon again?" she asked as she came back to the sitting room.

"It is such a bother, but I'll try," said mother, dolefully, as she laid aside her sewing.

Wasn't it queer for mother to think it a bother—could it be possible it was because she had used that word so much, she pondered, as she went back to school?

When she came home in the afternoon, Mrs. Gray called across the street that she was to come over there until her mother came from the city, where she had gone on the afternoon car.

"Why didn't you wait until I came, so I could have gone with you?" she asked, 'as soon as mother got home.

"Oh, it is such a bother to get you ready, and too much of a bother to look after you down in the city," said mother, with a very serious face, although her eyes were twinkling.

Mother thinks her own little girl a bother? The tears began to roll down her cheeks, and in another moment she was in her mother's arms.

"If you will just forget how naughty bad I was this morning," she sobbed, penitently, "I won't ever say that word again!"

"Spoken like my dear little girl," said mother, happily, dropping a kiss on the round little cheek. "We all have to learn, dear, that we can not live alone, but we have to help each other, and many, many times have to do things for ourselves and others that we very much dislike to do."—Ex.

THE SCHOOL OF SERVANTS.

The manager of an employment agency noted with some surprise that a woman in search of a maid asked each of the girls lined up against the wall if she had ever been employed in a minister's family. None of them had been. Then, the "New York Sun" says, the manager's curiosity prevailed.

"May I ask," said he, "why you are particularly anxious to know if these girls have had an engagement of that kind?"

"Because we are very hard up just now," the woman replied, candidly, "and I must have a girl who is economical. I have found that of all the servants those who have worked in clergymen's families know best how to economize."

AS THE CROW FLIES.

Johnny Wheelan looked at the little side gate hanging on its hinge and wished very hard that he hadn't tried to swing on it. Father had told him not to, and Johnny had meant to swing but a minute; but he had taken only one or two rides when, ker-plunk! down came the gate, dragging its top hinge right out of the post.

Father would be sure to ask him how it happened. "Look here," Johnny said to himself, "that hinge must have been just barely holding on, or it wouldn't have pulled out so quick. I'm not that heavy!" And having persuaded himself that this comfortable excuse was true, Johnny went around to the front porch, "What are those black birds, father?" Johnny asked presently, as a long-winged line of birds crossed the yard above the treetops.

"Crows," answered father. "Don't you know a crow when you see him, Jonathan?"

"I know 'em when they're close," said Johnny. "Where are they going, father?"

"Wherever it is, they are taking the shortest cut to it," answered Mr. Wheelan. "They always do. I never forget it because when I was a little boy like you my father told me I could never be a real man unless my speech was 'as the crow flies'—right straight to the truth, no cutting off corners and going round hard places. We never could fool God, my father used to say; and the only speech that pleased him was 'as the crow flies.'"

"Father," said Johnny, quite suddenly, "I was swinging on the side gate just now, and it broke down."

"That is told 'as the crow flies,'" said father.—Jewels.

THE BLACK MARKS.

Little Ethel had been told that she must not make pencil marks in her father's books, and she was so obedient that her father often lent his pencil to her. One day, however, she grew tired of scribbling on pieces of paper, and thought she would just make a little mark on the edge of the page. So she made a little mark in one of the books on the table, and the little mark made her want to make a big mark, until pretty soon she was scribbling all over the reading. Suddenly she thought of her father, and tried to rub out the marks with the eraser on the end of the pencil; but that only made long black streaks and mussed up the paper.

"Oh, dear, I can't unwrite these marks!" cried little Ethel, and she rubbed with the eraser until she rubbed a little hole in the paper.

Just then her father came into the room, and he told her that the black marks on the white paper were like the marks of naughty words and actions in little girl's hearts. The right way is to be obedient and not make the black marks; for after they are made, it is very, very hard to rub them out again.—Shepherd's Arms.

My most passionate desire is to have a clearer and fuller vision of God.—Tennyson.